Title: Sanctification and holiness (1 Corinthians 7:14): an investigation of the meaning of the Greek words *hegiastai* and *hagia* within the context of intermarriage

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Abstract:

This study investigates the meaning of the Greek words *hagiantai* and *agia* within the context of 1 Cor 7:14. The thesis employs the historical-grammatical method.

Based on the Jewish view regarding intermarriage, in Paul’s time, some of the Corinthian Christians considered intermarriage with unbelievers to be illegal unions, and the resultants children ‘*akaparta* “unclean”, “illegal” or “bastards”. They might also have concluded their church had been defiled and profaned, necessitating divorce. In confronting this view, Paul employed the words ‘*hagiantai* “he or she has been sanctified” and *hagia* “holy”.

This investigation tries to defend that in 1 Cor 7:14, the children party of an intermarriage sanctifies his unbelieving spouse, in the sense that the unbeliever is legitimately attached to the Christian party as a spouse. The children of the intermarriage are holy in the sense that they are legal children. This study concludes that the usage of the terminology of sanctification and holiness may be considered as a non-soteriological sanctification and holiness.

However, the unbelieving spouse and children of such a marriage may have a chance of being converted into Christianity, due to the existence of the Christian party in the family as indicated in 1 Cor 7:16. If they accept Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, they will be sanctified the so-called soteriological sanctification and holiness.